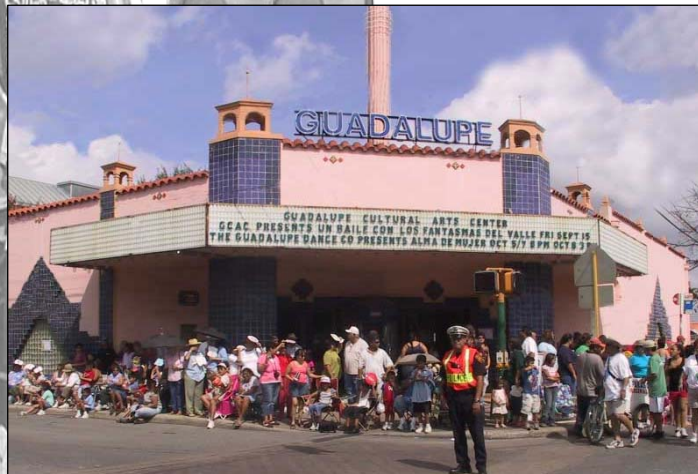


# Guadalupe Westside Community Plan:

A guide for action, innovation and revitalization



Prepared by the residents of the Guadalupe Westside area in partnership with  
the City of San Antonio Planning and Community Development Department  
May 3, 2007





## PREFACE / PROLOGO

### Congratulations! / ¡Felicidades!

You are reading the Community Plan for Guadalupe Westside. This plan is brought to you by many dedicated community members who committed a year and a half of their evenings and weekends to the development of this plan. The Avenida Guadalupe Association made the initial request for a plan however, the plan area boundaries extend beyond the boundaries of the Avenida Guadalupe Neighborhood Association. As a result, the Planning Team for this plan includes members of the Avenida Guadalupe Association and many other individuals representing the interests of the greater "Westside" area. The following 27 individuals are members of the Planning Team:

*Está leyendo el Plan Comunitario para el área de Guadalupe Westside. Se les brinda este plan por medio de miembros dedicados de la comunidad los quiénes se comprometieron por más de un año y medio, trabajando en las noches y los fines de semanas para crear este plan. Las Oficinas de Avenida Guadalupe iniciaron la petición con la Ciudad para un plan. Sin embargo, los límites del área del plan se extienden más allá de los límites de la Asociación de Vecindades de Avenida Guadalupe. Por esta razón, el "Equipo de Planificación" de este plan incluye miembros de la Asociación de Vecindades de Avenida Guadalupe y muchos otros que representan los intereses de todo el área del plan. Las siguientes personas son los miembros del Equipo de Planificación:*

Irene Aguilar ♦ Carlos Aguirre ♦ Victor Azios ♦ Father Don Bahlinger ♦ Maria Cantu ♦ Theresa De La Haya ♦ Guadalupe Espinosa ♦ Giovanni Gagliano ♦ George Galindo ♦ Katy Garza ♦ Elvia Gonzalez ♦ Jessica O. Guerrero ♦ Teresa G. Hernandez ♦ David Hinojosa ♦ Rosalinda Hinojosa ♦ Eugenio Macias ♦ J. Oscar Ramirez ♦ Gloria Reyes ♦ Bret Ruiz ♦ Graciela Sanchez ♦ Daniel Saucedo ♦ Yolanda Sosa ♦ Sylvia Zamarripa ♦ Councilwoman Patti Radle ♦ CC Aide Cecilia Picazo ♦ CC Aide Emma Hersh

Through the dedication of individuals associated with the following organizations, and/or allowing the use of the building space for community meetings and displays, contribution was also made to the building of this community plan:

*Por medio de la dedicación de las personas afiliadas a las siguientes organizaciones y/o por permitir el uso de su edificio para las reuniones comunitarias, también se hizo una contribución a la creación de este plan:*

Alamo Labor Properties ♦ Avenida Guadalupe Association ♦ Casa de Confianza ♦ El Progreso ♦ Esperanza Peace and Justice Center ♦ Guadalupe Theatre ♦ Lanier High School ♦ Making Connections ♦ Our Lady of Guadalupe Church ♦ Texas Diabetes Institute ♦ Calderon Boys and Girls Club ♦ HEB ♦ Bazan Library ♦ Kenney's Food Store ♦ San Juan Brady Community Center ♦ San Jacinto Senior Citizens Residence





Many, many other people also contributed to this plan through their participation in community meetings and work sessions. Over 200 community members attended one or all of the six (6) community-wide meetings. In addition, 20 staff members from various public agencies attended one or more of the six (6) Technical Advisory Meetings. The Planning Team held thirteen (13) meetings between November 2005 and February 2007.

*Muchas otras personas también contribuyeron en este plan a través de su participación en las reuniones comunitarias. Más de 200 miembros de la comunidad asistieron a una o a todas las seis reuniones públicas. Es más, 20 empleados de varias agencias públicas asistieron a una o más de las seis "Reuniones Técnicas." El Equipo de Planificación llevo a cabo trece reuniones entre Noviembre del 2005 y Febrero del 2007.*





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Community Plan is made possible through the support of  
City Officials, City Staff, and Community Participants  
dedicated to creating stronger communities.

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# INTRODUCTION

## WHAT IS A COMMUNITY PLAN?

A Community Plan is one service offered through the Community Building and Neighborhood Planning (CBNP) Program of the City of San Antonio. The primary objective of the CBNP Program, per Resolution 98-10-02 adopted by City Council in 1998, is to:

*"strengthen neighborhoods as self-sustaining communities working towards improved quality of life."*

The City of San Antonio Master Plan Policy Document, adopted in 1997, states that

*"Neighborhoods define and characterize the unique cultural, historical, and natural qualities of San Antonio..."*

*...Strong, viable neighborhoods create a sense of place within the community. Basic elements such as schools, churches, parks, open space, offices, stores, police and fire stations, health care, cultural and human services facilities, libraries, and all types of housing, if balanced properly, will contribute to safe, dynamic and sustainable neighborhoods that form our City."*

With that mission in mind, the City assists in the Community Plan process by providing staff support. The contents of each plan represent a balance of City of San Antonio Master Plan Policies, best planning practices, and input from community stakeholders that include area residents, businesses, property owners, community organizations, and neighborhood associations. The end result is a set of goals, objectives, and action steps tailored to this particular community.

## PURPOSE OF THE COMMUNITY PLAN

The purpose of the Guadalupe Westside Community Plan is to provide a guide for:

- ♦ action
- ♦ innovation
- ♦ revitalization

**The Plan is structured for community action.** The document is organized around five (5) general areas. Within each area; goals, objectives, and action steps have been identified by the community.

**The Plan encourages innovation.** Some goals are geared toward problem-solving. Other goals are geared toward enhancing strengths that already exist in the community. The action plan provides innovative steps to overcome community obstacles and strengthen community assets.

**The Plan is geared toward revitalization.** The culmination of innovative activities, while mindful of the past, has an eye toward the future.





## ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMUNITY PLAN

The **Guadalupe Westside Plan** is organized around the following elements:

- ◆ INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES
- ◆ PUBLIC SAFETY & CODE COMPLIANCE
- ◆ COMMUNITY HEALTH, EDUCATION, & WELL-BEING
- ◆ ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- ◆ HOUSING

There are two additional elements that assist with implementation:

- ◆ LAND USE
- ◆ AVENIDA GUADALUPE STRATEGIC REVITALIZATION PLAN

Below is a brief description of each element and a sample of issues addressed:

### INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES

This chapter focuses on public amenities and necessities that are expensive to build and maintain. Issues addressed include: **Storm Water, Parks, Libraries, Streets, Sidewalks, Bicycles, Traffic Safety, Alleys, Bus/Transit, Railroads**

### PUBLIC SAFETY & CODE COMPLIANCE

This chapter focuses on public safety and code compliance issues. Issues addressed include: **Neighborhood Beautification, Animal Care, Police, Crime Prevention, Safe Environments, Long-Term Drug Treatment and Use Prevention, Prevention of Prostitution, Graffiti Removal, Prevention and Education, Reduction of Gang Activity**

### COMMUNITY HEALTH, EDUCATION, & WELL-BEING

This chapter focuses on individuals and families. Issues addressed include: **Homelessness, Nutrition, Senior Quality of Life, Child Care, Education, Cultural Arts, Active Recreation, Faith-Based Organizations, Neighborhood and Community Organizations**

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

This chapter is focused on bringing together all of the components of the plan to create economic opportunities that provide services, products, and job opportunities for area residents. Issues addressed include: **The Support Existing Businesses, Enticing Future Business, Employment Opportunities, Job Skills Training, Commercial Buildings, Residents and Customers, Gentrification, Workforce Development.**

### HOUSING

This chapter addresses the location, quality, and affordability of housing. Issues addressed include: **Diversity of Housing, the Promotion of Home Ownership, Housing Rehabilitation, Public Housing, Development and Redevelopment Opportunities.**

### LAND USE

The Land Use section discusses existing land use and zoning. The Land Use Plan, adopted with this plan is the basis for future land use change decisions.

### STRATEGIC REVITALIZATION PLAN

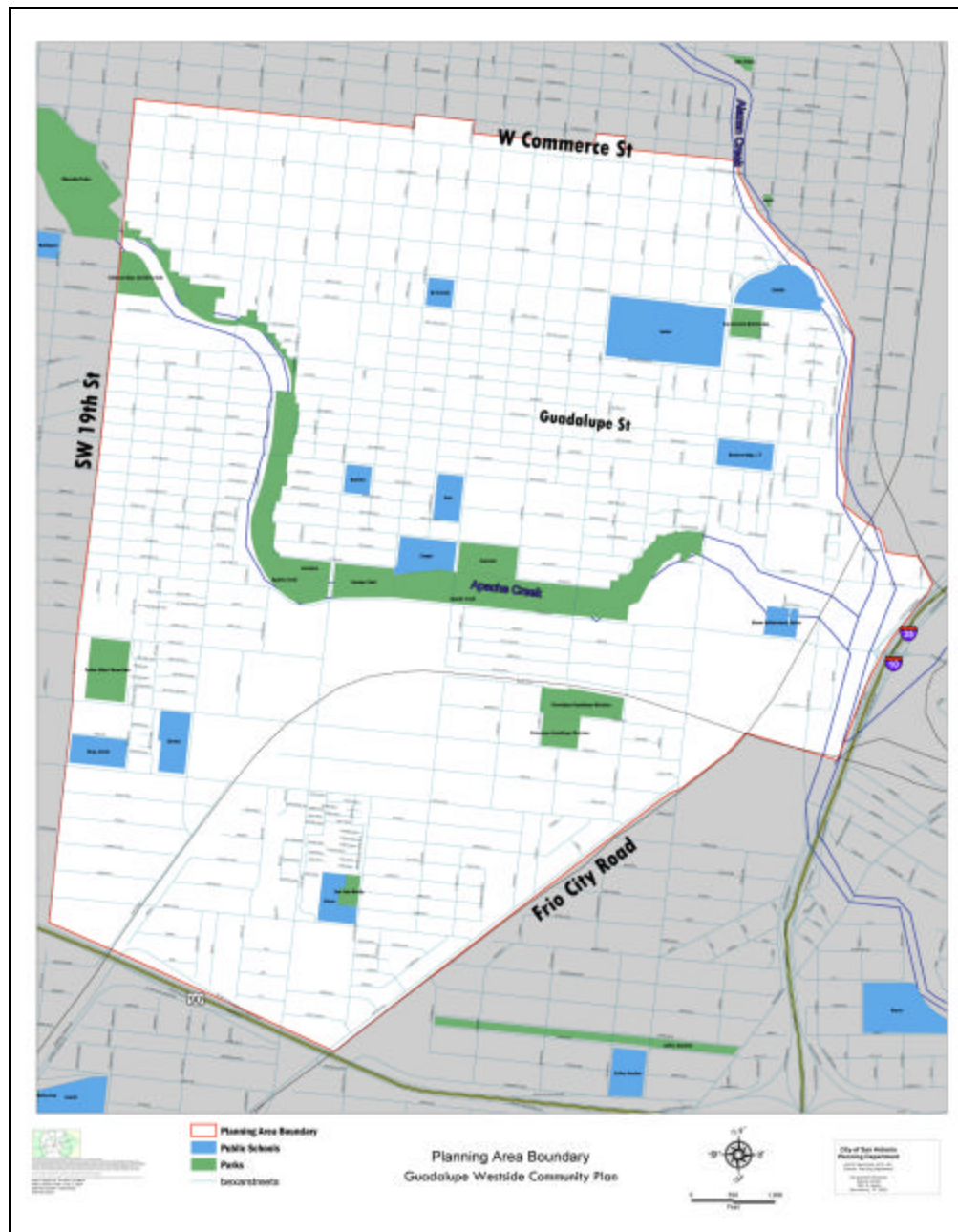
This section discusses a revitalization strategy for the future of the Avenida Guadalupe Corridor.





## GEOGRAPHY: WHERE IS THE PLANNING AREA?

The planning area is bound by Commerce Street to the north; SW19<sup>th</sup> Street to the west; Hwy 90 to the south; and Frio City Road and Alazan Creek to the west.





## MEETING DATES

### **Planning Team Organizational Meetings**

November 14, 2005	June 20, 2006
December 5, 2005	September 20, 2006
January 10, 2006	October 2, 2006
March 20, 2006	February 13, 2007

### **Public Community Meetings**

April 8, 2006 – SWOT Analysis  
May 13, 2006 – Land Use  
September 23, 2006 – General Review  
March 10, 2007 – Community Plan Open House

### **Technical Advisory Committee Workshops**

July 10 and Aug 7, 2006 – Housing and Economic Development  
July 24 and Aug 14, 2006 – Transportation and Infrastructure  
July 31 and August 21, 2006 – Community Facilities and Public Safety  
February 16, 2007 - Strategic Revitalization Plan Implementation Strategy Session

### **Planning Team Chapter Review Meetings**

October 16, 2006 – Infrastructure and Facilities Review  
October 30, 2006 – Public Safety and Code Compliance Review  
November 6, 2006 – Community, Health, Education, and Welfare Review  
November 20, 2006 – Economic and Business Development Review  
November 29, 2006 – General Review of All Chapters  
December 5, 2006 – Housing Review  
February 27, 2007 – Entire Plan

### **Avenida Guadalupe Strategic Revitalization Plan Public Meetings**

January 6, 2007 – Charrette Kick-Off  
January 13, 2007 – Theme Development  
January 27, 2007 – Site Design and Illustrations





## PUBLIC AGENCY CONTRIBUTORS

("TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE")

### Infrastructure

Public Works – Christina De La Cruz, Abigail Kinnison, Rebecca Paskos, John Wolters

MPO – Lydia Kelly

VIA – Manjiri Akalkotkar, Christina Castaño

Environmental Services – Priscilla Rosales Piña

### Public Safety and Code Compliance

Police -- Sergeant Jesús Maldonado, Officer Marcus Trujillo, Officer James Shirley

Code Compliance – Steve Lopez

Animal Care – Leticia Rivera

### Community Health, Education, and Well-Being

Metro Health – Linda Wasserman

Cultural Affairs – Victoria de Marquez

Parks and Recreation – Rocky Duque de Estrada

Library – Roberta Sparks

### Economics

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### Housing

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San Antonio Housing Authority – Ramiro Maldonado









## IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMUNITY PLAN

Elements of the Guadalupe Westside Community Plan contain Goals and Objectives identified by the community. To achieve these goals and objectives, "action" steps are identified that contain time frames, potential partners, and proposed funding sources.

### BENEFITS OF A PLAN

Once a Community Plan is adopted by City Council it becomes a component of the City's Master Plan. It represents the long-term vision of the community. While City Council representatives change every few years, the plan will remain an official document to be considered by elected officials and city staff before making decisions that affect this community. Specifically, the Land Use component of the Plan is important because future zoning decisions are legally bound to be consistent with the adopted Land Use Plan.

### ORGANIZATION

The Guadalupe Westside Planning Team, mentioned in the document preface, has been charged with kicking-off the implementation of this Community Plan. In October 2006, the Planning Team met and decided upon committee chairs to represent each of the five plan elements. Between October and December 2006, element review sessions were held and the committee chairs organized the attendance of community stakeholders and led their respective meetings. In effect, the beginning of Community Plan subcommittees were established for each of the plan elements to oversee implementation. These committees have been designated as the lead partner for the majority of the action steps within the plan elements. These micro-groups should continue to organize and add members. Regular meeting places, dates and times should be set in order to continue to manage implementation.

### OUTREACH

Addressing the goals, objectives and action steps contained in this plan can be an overwhelming task for just a small group of individuals. It is therefore critical that the Planning Team provide outreach to increase Plan Implementation Team members to establish new, and strengthen current, networks and partnerships. Some suggestions for outreach are to organize an Open House for the Community Plan after its adoption, an initial mail-out or sign posting to the entire planning area to recruit members, and solicit Plan Implementation Team members at area Neighborhood Association meetings.

### TIME FRAMES

Time frames to complete action steps vary. Some may take a few months, some several years. Some may never be fully completed because they are items which simply require continuous effort and maintenance.

### PARTNERS

City Departments are just one of numerous partners that may be needed to achieve the goals and objectives in the plan. Individuals, public agencies, school districts, businesses, non-profit organizations, and neighbors are a few other potential partners. On the previous page is a list of "public sector contributors" that have provided technical guidance on the creation of this plan.





## FUNDING

Not all goals in the plan require funding for implementation. The main ingredient vital to achieving the goals and objectives is focused effort. Time and effort, therefore, are the most important resources. When all is said and done, some objectives will require funding. The City does not offer specific financial commitments for items listed in the Community Plan. It is up to the community to collaborate with various public, private, and non-profit resources to secure funding for community projects.

## PROGRESS

To help track progress the following indicators are recommended to help show the communities' progress over time. These indicators can be found in Appendix D. They include baseline data, goals being measured, data source, and how frequently the data should be tracked. In addition to tracking indicators to help quantitatively measure success over time, it is encouraged that each of the plan elements are reviewed annually.

## PLANNING TEAM MEMBERS

Irene Aguilar ♦ Carlos Aguirre ♦ Victor Azios ♦ Father Don Bahlinger ♦ Maria Cantu ♦ Theresa De La Haya ♦ Guadalupe Espinosa ♦ Giovanni Gagliano ♦ George Galindo ♦ Katy Garza ♦ Elvia Gonzalez ♦ Jessica O. Guerrero ♦ Teresa G. Hernandez ♦ David Hinojosa ♦ Rosalinda Hinojosa ♦ Eugenio Macias ♦ J. Oscar Ramirez ♦ Gloria Reyes ♦ Bret Ruiz ♦ Graciela Sanchez ♦ Daniel Saucedo ♦ Yolanda Sosa ♦ Sylvia Zamarripa ♦ Councilwoman Patti Radle ♦ CC Aide Cecilia Picazo ♦ CC Aide Emma Hersh

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Public Safety and Code Compliance	♦ David Hinojosa
Community Health, Education & Well-being	♦ Rosalinda Hinojosa
Economic Development	♦ Teresa G. Hernandez
Housing	♦ Sylvia Zamarripa





## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The community today is the product of more than 100 years of development history. Before delving into the goals and objectives for the future, it is useful to review the elements of the community in light of the past. A review of the community's history is an important step in forging a trail for the next century. It is important to appreciate and respect how the community developed. As the community works together to forge a new beginning, this context can give insight and inspiration to future community leaders.

In the early days of growth, this community faced some of the same issues that are represented in the plan today: infrastructure, housing, community health and well-being, economic resources, and public safety. The specific nature of the issues, of course, has changed over time.

### Early Origins

The history of the Guadalupe Westside area is as old as the City itself. This geographic area was included in the original 36-square mile area which defined San Antonio in the City's 1837 Charter. In many ways, the physical development of the Guadalupe Westside geographic area follows general development trends in San Antonio and the United States. The property was for the most part unimproved, and used for pasture and farmland until the late 1800s.



The population today is primarily Mexican American, continuing a trend that began in the early development of this area. While the largest influx of Mexicans occurred in the early 1900s, it is likely that many of the original farmlands of the Westside were worked by native Mexicans both before and after the United States took over Texas in 1836 [Handbook of Texas Online].

The construction of the International and Great Northern Railroad Line in 1881, combined with other forces, spurred habitation of this area. The overall Mexican American population in San Antonio in 1900 was approximately 14,000. By 1935 this number grew to approximately 100,000 people. Today, there are approximately 700,000 San Antonians of Latino origin. In 1935, the Mexican American population represented about 40% of the overall City of San Antonio population. In 2000, this percentage increased to sixty percent (60%).

### Why Westside?

There are several reasons why this particular section of town was popular with immigrants from Mexico. One is that Guadalupe Street, once part of the Old Pecos Trail heading to El Paso, was an important entry way for many Mexican immigrants settling in San Antonio and elsewhere in the United States [Browne, 2002].

The close proximity of the Westside to employment opportunities in the industries of agriculture, ranching (the StockYards), and the Railroad also made it a popular destination. By 1929, San Antonio was the major center of Mexican population, next to Los Angeles. For Mexican immigrants, many who left Mexico because of the Revolution, San Antonio was a magnet of employment possibilities [Garcia, 1991].



Another significant reason that made the area accessible to immigrants was that it had no racial deed restrictions, which were common during this period of U.S. History. Patterns of segregation were





prevalent in the early development. Jim Crow laws, often associated with African-American discrimination, were also applied toward Mexican-Americans. In the early 1900s, San Antonians of Mexican descent lived mainly in the western portions of downtown and in the Westside. The flood of 1921 destroyed much of the downtown area, thereby, relocating many Mexican-American families to the Westside.

In spite of the segregation, the richness of culture through the church, social customs, and a common language made this area feel welcoming. Tejanos (Mexicans living in Texas) combined tenets of Mexican tradition with those of American culture. The result was a Tejano community that practiced a familiar folklore, observed Catholic holy days, Mexican national holidays, and sought participation in American national life.

Finally, in the early 1900s the land was relatively low in value which meant that immigrants with modest means could afford a place to live. Although many Mexican-Americans were of modest means, others were quite wealthy. The result was a mixed-income neighborhood that offered a wide range of housing options.

### Infrastructure and Facilities

In 1881, the City Council recognized the growing Latino population on the Westside by renaming streets running east and west to the names of cities in Mexico. These include: Buena Vista, Colima, Durango, El Paso, Guadalupe, Monterey, Durango, San Fernando, Tampico, and Vera Cruz. The streets running north and south were renamed after rivers in Texas such as Nueces, Frio, Cibolo, and Trinity.

The most notable infrastructure issue in the early development period was water and sewer access. It was not uncommon for one water source to be shared among several housing units. Although central water and sewer systems were available at the time, a lack of economic resources and political will restricted their access to some households.



### Housing

The lack of water and sewer, combined with makeshift housing, led to what many of the time deemed unsanitary living conditions. These conditions were thought to be dangerous to public health and contributed to illness and death in children and adults.

Although the City attempted to address the situation in 1915 when an ordinance was passed to regulate sanitation and building standards specifically intended for Westside housing, the regulations set forth (for construction, maintenance, sanitation, drainage, and garbage disposal) were rarely enforced [Cox, 2004].

A public health study conducted by Dr. Clair Drake of the American Public Health Association in 1926 considered the area to be a health risk. Another study done in 1936 by the Chamber of Commerce confirmed the continued health crisis related to living conditions. These studies were major contributors to the establishment of a national movement for public housing [Saunders, 2006].

Leading this movement in San Antonio was Father Carmelo Tranchese, who became pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in 1932. During the 1930s he gave speeches and wrote articles to bring attention to the needs of the Westside. He went so far as to make a personal appeal to President Franklin Roosevelt. In 1937 the Federal Housing Administration was created. Two of the first national housing





projects were the Alazan Courts and Apache Courts. These housing projects were so-named for the creeks upon which they bordered. When conflicts with the landowners threatened the cancellation of these projects, Father Tranchese invited Eleanor Roosevelt to visit the neighborhood. She did, and afterward convinced the national government to continue with the project [Saunders, 2006].



The early public housing projects provided sanitary living conditions by supplying water, sewer, and other amenities. They also offered a new source of hope for area residents that were living in substandard housing. In 1940, there were twice as many applications for the Alazan Courts housing as there were units available. Lilia Ramirez, who was a child when “los courts” was built, remarked *“it was like a palace to us. It was so pretty. It was furnished and the kitchen had the sink and open shelves... we were excited about having a bathroom there with hot water”* [Vela, 2006].

In addition to Alazan and Apache Courts (pictured above), the San Juan Homes were built in 1951 and the Cassiano Homes in 1953. Unlike the tall high-rise projects that were being built in cities like Chicago and St. Louis, the projects in San Antonio were two or three story apartment blocks with 2, 3, and 4 bedroom apartments. Some of the newer housing stock consists of single-family detached and attached housing such as duplexes and townhomes.



It is true that the rapid influx of people to the area led to the creation of many makeshift structures. These structures, which sometimes consisted of only one room, would house families that ranged in size from four to eleven people. While some of these structures may have been built to be temporary, others were built more sturdy, albeit, often board by board. While much of the history focuses on the national attention the Westside received for its housing conditions, it is an interesting juxtaposition against the







lively commercial and cultural arts district that also developed in this area and was available to rich and poor alike.

In an essay written by Pablo Miguel Martinez, former Director of Programs of the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center, he describes his mother's childhood home on El Paso Street as "*a refuge and a symbol of pride...*" he tells her story in "*wood and tin, nails and linoleum*". His mother grew corn in the tiny front yard and herbs in coffee cans carefully lined on her porch [Browne, 2002].



Not all housing of the early development period was makeshift. Many of the original homes still exist today. As elsewhere in San Antonio, the type of permanent housing being built in Villa de Guadalupe included Victorian, Bungalow, and Shotgun styles. In fact, the residential area between Durango, Monterey, Brazos, and Hamilton has been surveyed and would qualify as "Historic" should the neighborhood choose to officially pursue that designation.

Today, the need for affordable housing still exists. Recognizing and fulfilling that need, four local non-profit organizations [Avenida Guadalupe Association, American Sunrise, San Antonio Alternative Housing Corporation (SAAHC) and Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS)] began construction on the JT Brackenridge Subdivision in 2006. The subdivision is located directly south of JT Brackenridge Elementary School which turned 100 years old in 2006. A couple of the streets within the subdivision reflect the names of prominent individuals who once lived in the original Alazan-Apache Courts where the subdivision is currently being constructed.

### Economic Development

Despite conditions of poverty that existed for some, it must have been the richness in the cultural arts that, in part, led Richard Garcia, in his book "*Rise of the Mexican American Middle Class*" [1991], to describe the Westside of San Antonio during the 1920s and 1930s as "*the Paris of the Southwest urban barrios.*" Many businesses thrived along Guadalupe street. In addition to the residences, JT Brackenridge Elementary School, a police station, two moving-picture theatres (one being El Progreso Theatre), "*La Prensa*" (the leading Spanish newspaper), restaurants, bakeries (such as in the following pictures), a blacksmith, general stores, taverns, and gas stations all co-existed. In addition to these commercial buildings, there were also "*carpas*" (Mexican tent shows). Three prominent *carpas* in San Antonio were *Carpa Cubana*, *Carpa Mongivais*, and *Carpa Garcia*. As Pablo Miguel Martinez recalls from his childhood, "*Guadalupe Street was to my father and his friends, poor-working class Mexican Americans growing up in the Depression, as vibrant a Main Street as a town could boast...*"





### Employment

Employment opportunities at the time included “skilled” labor such as bricklaying or carpentry; business owners such as storekeepers, shoemakers, and bakers; and manual labor such as agricultural work. A common job for area residents at the time, due to the many pecan trees in the area, was pecan shelling. The long hours, poor working conditions, and low wages led to a strike in 1938. The strike was led by a young San Antonio woman, Emma Teneyuca. The Pecan Shellers Strike was important because it was an attempt to bring social and economic justice to the Mexican American community. The strike lasted for several months and ended at roughly the same time that a national minimum wage was established. Shortly there after, mechanization replaced many of the manual pecan shellers. At the height of the manual pecan shelling industry, approximately 11,000 workers (which represented about 13% of the population) were employed. After automation in 1938, this number was reduced to approximately 3,000.

### Cultural Arts

The cultural arts played a dramatic role in the development of the Guadalupe Westside area. The Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center (GCAC) was created in the late 1970's with a mission to, *“preserve, promote and develop the arts and culture of the Chicano/Latino/Native American peoples for all ages and backgrounds through public and educational programming in six disciplines: Dance, Literature, Media Arts, Theater Arts, Visual Arts and Xicano Music.”*



According to Pedro Rodriguez, former GCAC Director, this neighborhood has produced more world class flamenco and ballet folklorico dancers than anywhere in the United States. Music also served to help to define the culture of this area. Most notable were Conjunto and Orquesta Tejano. One story holds that legendary Texas accordion player Flaco Jimenez' grandfather, Patricio, bought his first accordion in the early 1900's from a German man in New Braunfels. This cultural exchange is said to have begun the famous Jimenez accordion tradition of the Westside *Conjunto* music. The idea of *Conjunto*, which means “the coming together to make the music of the people,” thrived in dance halls through the 1940s and 1950s and continues to thrive today. Also popular was Orquesta Tejano which was similar to a big band





that played songs in English and included Mexican boleros and danzón. Over time, it is said that the two traditions of music grew more similar in style and the resulting hybrid is what people consider “Tejano” music today.



Visual Arts are also pervasive in the Community. More than 200 murals (such as the one pictured above) were painted on the walls for the Cassiano Home public housing development in the 1980s by a group that was called the Community Cultural Arts Organization. The project is currently overseen by San Anto Cultural Arts, Inc. and includes many other murals throughout the community. Another symbol of the visual arts is the recently completed, veladora (candleholder) of the Virgen de Guadalupe which was created by internationally renowned local artist, Jesse Treviño. The artwork is a mosaic made from ceramic tile and stands 10 feet wide by 40 feet tall.



The Mujer Artes Cooperative de Esperanza is also an important element in preserving the cultural arts of the Mexican American community. Started in 1995 by the Esperanza Peace and Justice Center, it is located in a Victorian structure on El Paso Street. This pottery cooperative allows women within the community to explore their creative skills to create works in clay that express their lives and that of their families and community.

### Changes Over Time

Changes over time for Guadalupe Westside follows historic trends throughout the United States. After WWII, the GI Bill spurred affordable housing in the suburbs that lead to out-migration from inner-city neighborhoods. As for retail, the development of malls and strip shopping centers in the 1960s and 1970s led to a national shift in shopping patterns toward centralized locations and away from neighborhood stores.







For various reasons there has been relatively little overall reinvestment in the area. Median Household income, according to 2000 US Census, was \$19,900 compared to \$36,000 for city overall. In general as incomes rise, individuals and families have tended to move out of the area. At the community meetings held for the Guadalupe Westside Plan, citizens spoke of the need for higher end housing options for people that would like to stay in the community rather than move out as their incomes rise and have more income to spend on housing.

In 1979, the Avenida Guadalupe Association was formed to help spur redevelopment and improve the quality of life for the community. They have created several successful senior housing projects to serve area residents' needs including San Jacinto Community Senior Homes, Ernest M. Olivares Community Senior Homes, and Charles A. Gonzales Community Senior Homes. In addition to these residential communities, the Association has redeveloped the Avenida Guadalupe Plaza, Las Oficinas, and El Parian.



### What's Next?

The population in the Guadalupe Westside area is approximately 23,000 people. This Community Plan attempts to summarize the many strengths and weaknesses present in the community today. The goals of this plan are to improve the overall quality of life for area residents. The elements of this community plan focus primarily on the "physical" elements of the community: schools, parks, streets, and buildings. It also focuses on some of the social issues: public safety, education, economics. What it doesn't do is tell the personal stories of individuals within the community. Currently displayed throughout the community are many photos of the individuals and families that have built this neighborhood. The photos are part of a project titled "En Aquellos Tiempos... Fotohistorias del Westside" and is sponsored by the Esperanza Peace and Justice Center's Arte es Vida Program which seeks to promote the values, histories, traditions, and cultures of San Antonio's Westside.

Within the history of this community lies a deep cultural pride. An understanding and respect for the past are essential for the future of this community. Times have changed dramatically in the past 100 years. The neighborhood stores that were once prevalent have been shifted to other parts of San Antonio. The rich cultural pride of the Mexican American community has been disbursed throughout the city. While only 3% of the 700,000 Mexican Americans in San Antonio today live in this community, it still represents the original source of culture for the Mexican American community in San Antonio and the United States.





To help strengthen individuals and families within the community, Economic Development is at the forefront of the community's goals. Recreating the past may not be possible considering the economic realities today are much different than they were in the early 1900s, but recreating the energy that existed in the early development days may be possible.



Recognizing the need for economic development and continuing its long-standing history of neighborhood revitalization, the Avenida Guadalupe Association (AGA) has established a partnership with the City of San Antonio's Housing and Neighborhood Services Department, through the Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization Program (NCR). This partnership is designed to preserve, protect, and revitalize the economic and social fabric of Guadalupe Street, an inner-city corridor in the heart of the *Avenida Guadalupe Neighborhood*.

As a collaborator in this city-supported initiative, AGA receives multiple benefits that facilitate program coordination as well as assists in addressing the issues associated with commercial and community revitalization. The AGA will implement a full-time economic development program along the Guadalupe Street corridor with strategies in four major areas of effort. These include: promoting and marketing the business district to potential customers, preserving and maximizing the district's unique physical assets through design and planning of private and public improvements, providing assistance to promote business retention and attraction, and organizing together in order to recapture the economic vitality which once characterized the area.

There are several commercial corridors within the planning area including: Commerce, Zarzamora, and Frio City Road. Some are more auto-oriented, such as Zarzamora, whereas Guadalupe Street is more pedestrian scale. There is room for a wide variety of commercial enterprises within the planning area to serve the immediate community and beyond.

An urban revitalization chapter has been added to this community plan specifically for Guadalupe Street. As the historic entryway for the Mexican American Community, it is hoped that revitalization of this key corridor will spur opportunities throughout the entire planning area and other areas of the Westside.





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## THE COMMUNITY TODAY: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Below is a look at the community from a demographic perspective. The population data is based on information from the 2000 US Census. A detailed report of this information is available in Appendix C. The parcel data is based on Bexar County Appraisal District Data from 1995.

### Population

Approximately 22,700 people live in the Guadalupe Westside planning area. The majority of the population is of Hispanic origin (97%).

Ethnicity: 97% Hispanic, 2.5% Anglo, .2% African American, .2% Other

Approximately 37% of the population is under 18. Eleven percent (11%) is between the ages of 18 and 24. Fifty-two percent (52%) is age 25 or older. These numbers are fairly similar to the breakdown of the city overall with a slightly higher distribution to those under age 17.

#### Age Distribution

<u>Age</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Entire City</u>
0-4	2,462	11%	8%
5-17	5,798	26%	20%
18-24	2,599	11%	11%
25-44	5,637	25%	31%
45-64	3,502	15%	19%
65+	2,704	12%	10%
	<b>22,702</b>		

Approximately 52% of the target population is 25 years old or older (11,843). The majority of this population has less than a high school education (61%). This varies significantly from the city as a whole in which 25% of the population has less than a high school degree. Another significant difference is the number of people that have attended college and, in particular, the percentage of people that have received college degrees. Twenty two percent (22%) of the general population has a college degree compared to 3% in the planning area.

#### Education Attainment for Population > Age 25

<u>Education</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Entire City</u>
< 12th Grade	7,265	61%	25%
High School	2,959	25%	24%
Some College	1,327	11%	29%
Bachelors	208	2%	14%
Graduate+	84	1%	8%
	<b>11,843</b>		





### Income

According to the 2000 Census, the median household income in the area is \$19,900 which is a little more than half of the median income for the city at large.

<u>Income</u>	Planning Area	% Change	City	% Change
1990	\$10,500	--	\$23,584	--
2000	\$19,900	89.5%	\$36,214	53.0%

### **Parcels**

The Guadalupe Westside planning area contains roughly 1,300 acres of land divided into 6,674 parcels (per Bexar Appraisal). Of the 6,546 housing units identified by the 2000 Census, approximately half were owner occupied.

#### **Housing Units Total: 6,546**

Owner-Occupied: 3,297

Renter-Occupied: 3,249

### Residential Property Values

Of the 4,776 parcels identified by Bexar Appraisal as single-family residential, the median assessed value for a home is \$39,120. Approximately 15% (5,930) is attributed to the land.

Median Total Value: \$39,120

Land: \$5,930

Improvements: \$33,190

Approximately 73% of the homes in the area are assessed at less than \$50,000, and 29% are assessed less than \$30,000. There were no homes assessed above \$150,000.

#### Single-Family Residential Assessed Value

<u>\$ Range</u>	<u>Parcels</u>	<u>Percent</u>
0-10K	43	1%
10-20K	369	8%
20-30K	977	20%
30-40K	1114	23%
40-50K	993	21%
50-60K	649	14%
60-70K	367	8%
70-80K	170	4%
80-90K	65	1%
90-100K	13	0%
100-150K	16	0%
	4,776	





### Commercial Property Values

Approximately 502 parcels are listed in Bexar Appraisal for commercial use, of which, approximately 50% have an assessed value of \$50,000 or less. The median assessed value for commercial property is \$39,600. Approximately 33% (\$13,150) is attributed to the land value.

Median Total Value: \$39,600

Land: \$13,150

Improvements: \$26,450

#### Commercial Property Assessed Value

<u>\$ Range</u>	<u>Parcels</u>	<u>Percent</u>
0-10K	49	10%
10-20K	64	13%
20-30K	77	15%
30-40K	62	12%
40-50K	39	8%
50-60K	32	6%
60-70K	21	4%
70-80K	19	4%
80-90K	17	3%
90-100K	8	2%
100-150K	34	7%
150-200K	18	4%
200-300K	16	3%
300-500K	17	3%
500-1,000K	17	3%
>1,000K	12	2%
	502	





# ELEMENTS



## INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES



## PUBLIC SAFETY AND CODE COMPLIANCE



## COMMUNITY HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELL-BEING



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



## HOUSING





## GOALS AT-A-GLANCE

The following is a summary of the major goals listed in each section of the plan. Below, the at-a-glance list is a more detailed list of the goals and objectives. These two sections offer a guide to help identify specific actions steps within the plan elements.

### **INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES**

- GOAL 1: STORM WATER MANAGEMENT
- GOAL 2: ENHANCE COMMUNITY FACILITIES
- GOAL 3: MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE
- GOAL 4: MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE SIDEWALKS
- GOAL 5: PROVIDE SAFE BICYCLE NETWORKS
- GOAL 6: INCREASE SAFETY OF TRANSPORTATION NETWORK
- GOAL 7: CLEAN, SAFE, AND FUNCTIONAL ALLEYS
- GOAL 8: IMPROVE ACCESS TO TRANSIT FACILITIES
- GOAL 9: ENSURE SAFETY AND EFFICIENCY OF RAILROADS

### **PUBLIC SAFETY AND CODE COMPLIANCE**

- GOAL 10: CODE COMPLIANCE
- GOAL 11: COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CRIME PREVENTION

### **COMMUNITY HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELL-BEING**

- GOAL 12: ASSIST INDIVIDUALS WITH BASIC NEEDS
- GOAL 13: STRENGTHEN THE FAMILY UNIT
- GOAL 14: PROMOTE PARTICIPATION IN CULTURAL ARTS PROGRAMS
- GOAL 15: ENHANCE PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVE RECREATION
- GOAL 16: INCREASE PARTICIPATION IN NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

- GOAL 17: SUPPORT EXISTING AND FUTURE BUSINESSES
- GOAL 18: CREATE AREAWIDE BUSINESS PLAN
- GOAL 19: ENHANCE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

### **HOUSING**

- GOAL 20: HOUSING





## LIST OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### **INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES**

#### GOAL 1: STORM WATER MANAGEMENT

- 1.1 Maintain Drainage Infrastructure
- 1.2 Improve Drainage Infrastructure

#### GOAL 2: ENHANCE COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- 2.1 Improve Park Amenities, Maintenance, and Security
- 2.2 Provide Additional Parks and Open Space
- 2.3 Expand Access to Libraries

#### GOAL 3: MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

- 3.1 Maintenance of Streets
- 3.2 Improve Street Infrastructure
- 3.3 Increase Transportation Efficiency

#### GOAL 4: MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE SIDEWALKS

- 4.1 Maintenance of Sidewalks
- 4.2 Construction and Rehabilitation of Sidewalks
- 4.3 Improve Sidewalk Access for Persons with Disabilities

#### GOAL 5: PROVIDE SAFE BICYCLE NETWORKS

- 5.1 Explore Possibilities for Bicycle Paths

#### GOAL 6: INCREASE SAFETY OF TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

- 6.1 Safety at Intersections and Crosswalks
- 6.2 Reduce Speeding

#### GOAL 7: CLEAN, SAFE, AND FUNCTIONAL ALLEYS

- 7.1 Maintain and Improve Alleys

#### GOAL 8: IMPROVE ACCESS TO TRANSIT FACILITIES

- 8.1 Monitor Transit Routes
- 8.2 Ensure Adequate Amenities at Bus Stops
- 8.3 Petition for Improvements

#### GOAL 9: ENSURE SAFETY AND EFFICIENCY OF RAILROADS

- 9.1 Improve the Efficiency of Area Railroads
- 9.2 Improve the Safety of Area Railroads







## **PUBLIC SAFETY AND CODE COMPLIANCE**

### GOAL 10: CODE COMPLIANCE

- 10.1 Educate Community about Code Regulations
- 10.2 Assist Property Owners with Code Compliance
- 10.3 Neighborhood Beautification
- 10.4 Animal Care and Control
- 10.5 Prevent Unwanted and Stray Animal Population

### GOAL 11: COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CRIME PREVENTION

- 11.1 Community and SAPD Collaboration
- 11.2 Educate the Community about Crime Prevention
- 11.3 Target the Prevention of Crimes Against Seniors
- 11.4 Improve Infrastructure to Create Safer Environments
- 11.5 Long Term Drug Treatment
- 11.6 Prostitution Prevention
- 11.7 Graffiti Education, Removal and Prevention
- 11.8 Reduce Gang Activity

## **COMMUNITY HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELL-BEING**

### GOAL 12: ASSIST INDIVIDUALS WITH BASIC NEEDS

- 12.1 Connect Individuals and Families with Services to Help Meet Basic Needs
- 12.2 Address Homelessness in the Community
- 12.3 Improve Community Health Through Better Nutrition

### GOAL 13: STRENGTHEN THE FAMILY UNIT

- 13.1 Broaden Educational Opportunities for Individuals
- 13.2 Foster Intergenerational Support within the Community

### GOAL 14: PROMOTE PARTICIPATION IN CULTURAL ARTS PROGRAMS

- 14.1 Community Participation in Cultural Arts Programs
- 14.2 Economic Development and Cultural Heritage

### GOAL 15: ENHANCE PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVE RECREATION

- 15.1 Community Participation in Sports and Active Recreation

### GOAL 16: INCREASE PARTICIPATION IN NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS

- 16.1 Strengthen Cooperation among area Community Organizations
- 16.2 Encourage the Establishment of Neighborhood Associations
- 16.3 Encourage Collaboration among Adjacent Community Plan Areas





## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### GOAL 17: SUPPORT EXISTING AND FUTURE BUSINESSES

- 17.1 Coordinate Programs Available to all Businesses
- 17.2 Provide Incentives for New Businesses
- 17.3 Address mismatches between Available Employment and Job Skills
- 17.4 Financing / Credit Rating / Credit Counseling

### GOAL 18: CREATE AREAWIDE BUSINESS PLAN

- 18.1 Assess Current Economic Condition of the Community
- 18.2 Create Action Plan for Economic Development
- 18.3 Create and Implement Strategic Plans for Specific Commercial Areas

### GOAL 19: ENHANCE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- 19.1 Examine Impact of Physical Environment on Economy
- 19.2 Encourage Rehabilitation of Buildings
- 19.3 Encourage the Development of Vacant and Substandard Parcels
- 19.4 Promote Compatibility Between Business and Residents
- 19.5 Monitor Impact of Rising Property Values

## **HOUSING**

### GOAL 20: HOUSING

- 20.1 Diversity of Housing
- 20.2 Home Improvement and Maintenance
- 20.3 Promote Home Ownership



